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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 USIA-06 FBO-02 /024 W
----------131005Z 027744 /12
R 130830Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9286
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY MBABANE

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DEPT FOR AF/S PERRY, USDOC FOR SALLY MILLER

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ABLD, BEXP, SCUL, BC
SUBJECT: US PAVILION FOR GABORONE TRADE FAIR

REF:76 JOHANNESBURG 1703

1. DECEMBER 20 EMBOFF CALLED ON NEWLY INSTALLED SENIOR COMMERCIAL OFFICER OF MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, SIKWANE, AND ASKED FOR GOB REACTION TO IDEA OF ERECTING CUSTOM-MADE US PAVILION IN TIME FOR GABORONE TRADE FAIR IN JULY 1977 (SPECIFIC DATE NOT YET ANNOUNCED) OR JULY 1978. SIKWANE MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:
A. GOB ANXIOUS TO EXPAND AND INTERNATIONALIZE FAIR AND MORE FUNDS WOULD BE ALLOCATED TO DEVELOPMENT OF FAIR GROUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE. A SPECIAL US PAVILION WOULD FIT IN PERFECTLY WITH GOB INTENTIONS.

B. PERMANENT BUILDINGS COULD BE SAFELY BUILT BECAUSE PRESENT FAIR SITE WOULD BE IN USE FOR FORSEE-ABLE FUTURE, AT LEAST OVER NEXT FIVE TO TEN YEARS.
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NO PLANS EXIST TO MOVE THE SITE AND, INDEED THERE IS NO OTHER PLACE TO PUT IT SINCE ALL AREAS AROUND GABORONE WERE ALREADY MARKED FOR PROJECTS.

C. GREAT LATITUDE EXISTED CONCERNING LOCATION OF PAVILION, EITHER IN THE TRADITIONAL SPOT WHERE OUR RENTED EXHIBITION STALLS NOW STAND (THIS WOULD BE

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VERY SATISFACTORY TO EMBASSY) OR ON SOME OTHER SPOT ON FAIR GROUNDS.

D. ARCHITECTURAL PLANS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING BOARD (OF WHICH SIKWANE IS MEMBER). EXAMPE OF CHIEF CONSIDERATIONS WOULD BE WHETHER PAVILION WOULD ALLOW FAIR GOERS TO LEAVE PREMISES AT WILL RATHER THAN FORCING THEM TO PARADE THROUGH ENTIRE EXHIBITION ONCE INSIDE. SKIWANE GAVE IMPRESSION THAT BOARD REVIEW WOULD PRESENT NO PROBLEM.

E. SIKWANE RECOMMENDED THAT WHEN EMBASSY HAD GREEN LIGHT FROM WASHINGTON, IT SUBMIT PLANS TO TRADE FAIR COMMITTEE.

COMMENT: EMBASSY BELIEVES TIME HAS COME TO DISCONTINUE USE OF STANDARD PAVILION STRUCTURE PROVIDED BY GOB. TRADE FAIR IS NOW ESTABLISHED INSTITUTION RECEIVING HIGH GOB PRIOIRTY. A NUMBER OF EXHIBITORS, TO INCLUDE BANKS AND GOB AGENCIES HAVE ALREADY ERECTED THEIR OWN IMAGINATIVE AND ATTRACTIVE PAVILIONS FOR THE FAIR. EXHIBITS ARE PROFESSIONAL AND OF HIGH QUALITY. IMPACT OF US PRESENCE AT FAIR WILL DECLINE IF WE DO NOT MOVE AHEAD.

2. TOO, CONSTRUCTION OF OUR OWN PAVILION COULD BE WISE ECONOMIC MOVE, SAVING ON RENTS (DOLLARS 825 FOR 1976 FAIR) AND ON ANNUAL CONSTRUCTION CHARGES CIRCA DOLLARS 3,000 TO KEEP CRUMBLING GOVERNMENT PAVILION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN DECENT SHAPE. UNFORTUNATELY, REPAIRS/IMPROVEMENTS WE RECEIVE FOR OUR MONEY ARE OF LOW QUALITY AND DO NOT WEATHER WELL.

3. EMBASSY BELIEVES PAVILION SHOULD ACCOMODATE ROOMS FOR MOVIE/VTR THEATER, TRADEAND USIS EXHIBITION, STORAGE AREA AND VIP LOUNGE. PAVILION SHOULD BE, AND WE FEEL COULD BE, LARGER THAN DIMENSIONS OF BUILDING USED FOR '76 FAIR: 46 1/2 FEET BY 31 FEET, WITH ADDITIONAL 20 FEET OF AWNING SPACE. TOO, A SECOND FLOOR MIGHT BE INCLUDED - AT LEAST PSOSSIBILITY WAS ALLUDED BY BY SIKWANE.

4. FINALLY, EMBASSY STRONGLY FEELS POLITICAL CONSID-ERATIONS COMPEL DECISION TO GO AHEAD ON THIS PROJECT TO BOLSTER US/WESTERN PRESENCE AT TIME WHEN CHINESE AND SOVIET PRESENCE IS LOOMING AND INCREASING.

5. AS SUGGESTED PARA 3, PAVILION SHOULD ALSO HAVE

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CONSIDERABLE USIS FUNCTION, BOTH FOR DISSEMINATION
OF INFO AND TO GIVE APPEARANCE OF PROFESSIONALISM
AT FAIR WHICH EMBASSY UNABLE TO ACHIEVE GIVEN LOCAL
RESOURCES AT ITS DISPOSAL. IF COMPLETED STRUCTURE
PERMITS, USIS WOULD USE THEATER AREA AT OTHER TIMES
OF YEAR FOR FILM SHOWINGS, EXHIBITS, SPEAKERS AND
OTHER REPRESENTATIONAL EVENTS.

6. FOR US CONGEN JOHANNESBURG: WOULD GREATLY
APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS YOU MIGHT WISH TO MAKE ON
THIS PROPOSAL.

7. FOR DEPT AND USDOC: WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING
REACTION TO EMBASSY PROPOSAL AND, IF FAVORABLE, INFO
CONCERNING FUNDS AVAILABLE, WHEN AVAILABLE, AND WHAT
OTHER GUIDANCE AND ASSISTANCE EMBASSY COULD RECEIVE
IN IMPLEMENTING THIS PROJECT. ASSUME POSSIBILITY
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THAT UIS AND USDOC MIGHT ALREADY HAVE ARCHITECTURAL
PLANS FOR SUCH A PAVILION.
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